

1 33507/VGG/J104

WE CLAIM:

5 1. A sputtering target made by a process including casting having a target surface with the following characteristics:

- a) substantially homogenous composition at any location;
- b) substantial absence of pores, voids, inclusions
- 10 and other casting defects;
- c) substantial absence of precipitates;
- d) grain size less than about  $1\mu\text{m}$ ; and
- e) substantially uniform structure and texture at any location.

15 2. A sputtering target according to claim 1 comprising Al, Ti, Cu, Ta, Ni, Mo, Au, Ag, Pt.

20 3. A sputtering target according to claim 1 comprising Al and about 0.5 wt.% Cu.

4. A method for fabricating an article suitable for use as a sputtering target comprising the steps of:

- a. providing a cast ingot;
- 25 b. homogenizing said ingot at time and temperature sufficient for redistribution of macrosegregations and microsegregations; and
- c. subjecting said ingot to equal channel angular extrusion to refine grains therein.

30 5. A method according to claim 4 further comprising, after subjecting said ingot to equal channel angular extrusion to refine grains therein, manufacturing same to produce a sputtering target.

35

1 33507/VGG/J104

6. A method according to claim 4 wherein said ingot is subject to 4 to 6 passes of equal channel angular extrusion.

5

7. A method of making a sputtering target comprising the steps of:

a. providing a cast ingot with a length-to-diameter ratio up to 2;

10

b. hot forging said ingot with reductions and to a thickness sufficient for healing and full elimination of case defects;

c. subjecting said hot forged product to equal channel extrusion; and

15

d. manufacturing into a sputtering target.

8. A method of fabricating an article suitable for use as a sputtering target comprising the steps of:

a. providing a cast ingot;

20

b. solutionizing heat treating said cast ingot at temperature and time necessary to dissolve all precipitates and particle bearing phases; and

c. Equal channel angular extruding at temperature below aging temperatures.

25

9. A method according to claim 8 further comprising manufacturing to produce a sputtering target.

10. A method according to claim 4 including:

30

a. homogenizing the ingot;

b. hot forging of the ingot; and

c. Equal channel angular extruding forged billet.

11. A method according to claim 7 including:

35

a. hot forging the ingot; and

1 33507/VGG/J104

b. equal channel angular extruding the forged  
billet.

5

12. A method according to claim 10 further comprising  
producing a sputtering target.

10 13. A method according to claim 11 further comprising  
producing a sputtering target.

14. A method according to claim 1 further comprising a  
solutionizing heat treatment prior to equal channel angular  
extrusion.

15

15. A method according to claim 1 further comprising  
water quenching after homogenizing.

16. A method according to claim 7 including:

20

a. heating the cast ingot before forging at a  
temperature and for a time sufficient for solutionizing;

b. hot forging at a temperature above  
solutionizing temperature; and

25 c. water quenching the forged billet immediately  
after forging.

17. A method according to claim 4 including:

a. cooling the ingot after homogenizing to a  
forging temperature above the solutionizing temperature;

30

b. Hot forging at a temperature above the  
solutionizing temperature; and

c. water quenching the forged billet immediately  
after forging step.

35

1 33507/VGG/J104

18. A method according to claims 4, 7 or 8 including  
aging after solutionizing and water quenching at a temperature  
5 and for a time sufficient to produce fine precipitates with an  
average diameter of less than  $0.5 \mu\text{m}$ .

19. A billet for equal channel angular extrusion of  
targets fabricated from a cast ingot of diameter  $d_0$  and length  
10  $h_0$  which has been forged into a disc of diameter  $d_0$  and  
thickness  $h_0$  and from which two segments from two opposite  
sides of forged billet to provide a billet width  $A$  have been  
removed in such a manner that thickness  $H$  corresponds to the  
thickness of the billet for equal channel angular extrusion,  
15 the wide  $A$  corresponds to the dimension of square billet for  
equal channel angular extrusion, and dimensions of the cast  
ingot and the forged billet are related by the formulae:

$$D=1.18A$$

$$d_0^2 h_0 = 1.39.A^2 H$$

20 20. A method according to claims 4, 7 or 8 in which the  
step of equal channel angular extrusion is performed at a  
temperature below the temperature of static recrystallization  
and at a speed sufficient to provide uniform plastic flow, and  
25 for a number of passes and routes that provides dynamic  
recrystallization during processing.

21. A method according to claims 5, 9 or 13 including  
annealing after final target fabrication at the temperature  
30 which is equal to the temperature of the sputtered target  
surface during steady sputtering.

22. A method according to claim 13 in which annealing  
after final target fabrication is performed gradientally by  
35 exposing the sputtered target surface to the same heating

1 33507/VGG/J104

condition and exposing an opposite target surface to the same  
cooling condition as under target sputtering during a  
5 sufficient time for steady annealing.

23. A method according to claim 22 in which gradient  
annealing of the target is performed directly in a sputtering  
machine at sputtering conditions before starting a production  
10 run.

24. A method according to claims 4, 7 or 8 in which the  
step of equal channel angular extrusion include a first  
extrusion with 1 to 5 passes into different directions  
15 intermediate annealing at a low temperature and for a time  
sufficient to produce very fine precipitates of average  
diameter less than about 0.1  $\mu\text{m}$ , and a second extrusion with a  
sufficient number of passes to develop a dynamically  
recrystallized structure.

25. A method for controlling texture of sputtering  
targets by a process according to claim 4 wherein the step of  
equal channel angular extrusion is performed by changing the  
number of passes and billet orientation between successive  
25 passes in a manner to produce a desired final texture strength  
and orientation.

26. A method for controlling texture of sputtering  
targets by a process according to claim 5 wherein the step of  
30 equal channel angular extrusion is performed by changing the  
number of passes and billet orientation between successive  
passes in a manner to produce a desired final texture strength  
and orientation.

35

1 33507/VGG/J104

27. A method for controlling texture of sputtering  
targets by a process according to claim 8 wherein the step of  
5 equal channel angular extrusion is performed by changing the  
number of passes and billet orientation between successive  
passes in a manner to produce a desired final texture strength  
and orientation.

10 28. A method according to claim 25 including a  
preliminary processing performed before extrusion to produce  
strong original texture of the same orientation as of the  
desired final texture after equal channel angular extrusion.

15 29. A method according to claim 25 including the  
additional step of recovery annealing performed between  
extrusion passes at temperatures below the temperature of  
static recrystallization.

20 30. A method according to claim 25 including the  
additional step of recovery annealing after equal channel  
angular extrusion at temperatures below the temperature of  
static recrystallization.

25 31. A method according to claim 25 including the  
additional step of recrystallization annealing performed  
between extrusion passes at a temperature equal to the  
beginning temperature of static recrystallization.

30 32. A method according to claim 25 including the  
additional step of annealing performed after the step of equal  
channel angular extrusion at a temperature equal to the  
beginning temperature of static recrystallization.

35

33. A method according to claim 25 including the  
additional step of recrystallization annealing performed  
5 between extrusion passes at temperature above the temperature  
of full static recrystallization.

34. A method according to claim 25 including the  
additional step of recrystallization annealing performed after  
10 the step of equal channel angular extrusion at temperatures  
above the temperature of full static recrystallization.

35. A method according to claims 4, 7 or 8 wherein at  
least different types of thermal treatments are performed  
15 between extrusion passes and after the final step of equal  
channel angular extrusion.

36. A method according to claim 4, 7 or 8 further  
comprising a thermal treatment for control of grain size and  
20 distribution of second phase particles.

25

30

35